



2002 Wetlands Reserve Program

Program Focus —
The A. Reese and Sara R. Brown WRP permanent easement was secured on December 29, 1997. The 1240-acre tract lies in Liberty County in southeast Texas. Since securing the easement, the NRCS has restored over 400 acres of inland freshwater wetlands and an additional nearly 200 acres have been planted to native hardwood trees. Another 60 acres of mixed shallow and deep open water habitat and over 500 acres of forested riparian areas are being managed for a wide variety of flora and fauna. Literally thousands of migratory and resident birds, reptiles, amphibians, and several species of upland game birds and mammals use the easement on a seasonal or yearlong basis. The Brown WRP easement exemplifies the intent of the program by providing high quality habitat to a myriad of plants and animals.



Texas Summary

Overview

The WRP emphasis is to protect, restore, and enhance the functions and values of wetland ecosystems. Landowner interest in this program has steadily grown over the years since first being introduced in 1994. With various types of wetland systems in the state including playa lakes in the north, riverine systems in the central and east, and low lying coastal areas in the south, a high potential exists for restoration projects. The goal of WRP in Texas is to restore habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, including threatened and endangered species. NRCS administers this program, but works closely with other agencies such as the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited and the Conservation Fund of Texas.

Accomplishments

There are currently 81 projects enrolled in the program on 52,133 acres. Over 26 million dollars have been allocated in 25 different counties in Texas. Projects include 66 permanent easements, 10 thirty-year easements and 5 restoration cost-share agreements. There have been two special project areas in the state where emphasis was placed to restore critical wetlands. One is in the Lower Rio Grande Valley where in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, a 16,000 acre tract of coastal saline wetlands are being restored. Another is the Red River Initiative, an effort to restore thousands of acres of previously lost wetlands adjacent to the Red River in East Texas.

Program Benefits

Many acres of Texas wetlands were drained years ago for agricultural purposes with a resulting loss in habitat for wetland dependent wildlife species, primarily migratory waterfowl. Local communities welcome a return of these wetlands that will benefit these areas by enhancing wildlife, providing flood protection, and improving water quality. Bird watching in Texas has also become a major tourist attraction in many parts of the state. The restoration efforts will enhance habitat for many species of birds which will provide an additional boost for local and state economies.

State contacts

James E. Tillman, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, 254-742-9808, 101 S. Main Street, Temple, TX 76501-7602.
Doug Sharer, WRP Program Liaison, 254-742-9825

Texas Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

	Fiscal Year 2002		Cumulative Total (94-02)	
Congressional Districts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$5,357,014	24	\$9,329,264	43
District 2	\$0	0	\$1,619,122	3
District 4	\$1,567,234	3	\$2,090,691	6
District 5	\$0	0	\$548,303	2
District 6	\$213,056	1	\$2,363,536	8
District 9	\$0	0	\$70,000	1
District 11	\$0	0	\$612,541	2
District 13	\$0	0	\$264,584	1
District 14	\$0	0	\$4,544,502	0
District 17	\$1,005,811	1	\$1,005,811	1
District 27	\$0	0	\$2,080,270	3
State Totals	\$8,143,115	29	\$24,528,624	81

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